



'Rotten' commute to improve with I-10 widening

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Barbara Runyan's daily commute from her Goodyear home to a Phoenix law office takes at least an hour and 15 minutes each way - even longer if an accident is clogging Interstate 10.

"It's rotten," she said.

After weeks of heated debate, leaders recently struck a financial agreement to speed up the freeway's widening by four years, a project that would provide some relief to commuters like Runyan.

Now, the Arizona Department of Transportation will select a contractor, and work is scheduled to start at the beginning of next year.

Construction would be finished by summer 2010, expanding an 8-mile stretch of I-10 to five lanes each way. The freeway now narrows to as few as two lanes in each direction.

Yet ADOT doesn't characterize the widening between Loop 101 and Sarival Avenue as a long-term solution to rush-hour gridlock. By 2030, the department estimates traffic on I-10 will more than double because of the area's population growth.

Runyan, who has been making her commute for about three years, said traffic gets worse every winter.

"You'd think they'd widen it just because of the number of accidents," she said. "They can't widen that thing soon enough."

ADOT said the I-10 project would be put on hold for about two months unless a financial agreement was reached by Monday among Goodyear, Avondale and Litchfield Park. The cities came to a compromise on Thursday.

ADOT did not want the I-10 expansion to hold up projects on Interstate 17 in the north Valley. The state does not want to ask for bids on multiple large projects at the same time because contractors may bid on only one, and the state may not get the lowest price, spokesman Timothy Tait said.

- [I-10 widening on target to start early next year](#)

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